

## COUNTRY DATA: DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO: Information from the CIA World

### INTRODUCTION

Established as a Belgian colony in 1908, the Republic of the Congo gained its independence in 1960, but its early years were marred by political and social instability. Col. Joseph MOBUTU seized power and declared himself president in a November 1965 coup. He subsequently changed his name - to MOBUTU Sese Seko - as well as that of the country - to Zaire. MOBUTU retained his position for 32 years through several sham elections, as well as through brutal force. Ethnic strife and civil war, touched off by a massive inflow of refugees in 1994 from fighting in Rwanda and Burundi, led in May 1997 to the toppling of the MOBUTU regime by a rebellion backed by Rwanda and Uganda and fronted by Laurent KABILA. He renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but in August 1998 his regime was itself challenged by a second insurrection again backed by Rwanda and Uganda. Troops from Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe intervened to support KABILA's regime. A cease-fire was signed in July 1999 by the DRC, Congolese armed rebel groups, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe but sporadic fighting continued. Laurent KABILA was assassinated in January 2001 and his son, Joseph KABILA, was named head of state. In October 2002, the new president was successful in negotiating the withdrawal of Rwandan forces occupying eastern Congo; two months later, the Pretoria Accord was signed by all remaining warring parties to end the fighting and establish a government of national unity. A transitional government was set up in July 2003. Joseph KABILA as president and four vice presidents represented the former government, former rebel groups, the political opposition, and civil society. The transitional government held a successful constitutional referendum in December 2005 and elections for the presidency, National Assembly, and provincial legislatures in 2006. The National Assembly was installed in September 2006 and KABILA was inaugurated president in December 2006. Provincial assemblies were constituted in early 2007, and elected governors and national senators in January 2007.

### GEOGRAPHY

<b>Location</b>	Central Africa, northeast of Angola
<b>Area</b>	2,344,858 sq km
<b>Climate</b>	tropical; hot and humid in equatorial river basin; cooler and drier in southern highlands; cooler and wetter in eastern highlands; north of Equator – wet season (April to October), dry season (December to February); south of Equator – wet season (November to March), dry season (April to October)
<b>Natural Resources</b>	Cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, petroleum, industrial and gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, uranium, coal, hydropower, timber
<b>Total Renewable</b>	1283 cu km (2001)

<b>Water Resources</b>	
<b>Freshwater Withdrawal</b>	0.36 cu km/year (domestic 53 %; industrial 17 %; agricultural 31 %)
<b>Natural Hazards</b>	<p>periodic droughts in south; Congo River floods (seasonal); in the east, in the Great Rift Valley, there are active volcanoes.</p> <p>volcanism: Nyiragongo (elev. 3,470m, 11,384 ft), which erupted in 2002 and is experiencing ongoing activity, poses a major threat to the city of Goma, home to a quarter of a million people; the volcano produces unusually fast-moving lava, known to travel up to 100 km (60 mi)/hour; Nyiragongo has been deemed a "Decade Volcano" by the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior, worthy of study due to its explosive history and close proximity to human populations; its neighbor, Nyamuragira, which erupted in 2010, is Africa's most active volcano; Visoke is the only other historically active volcano.</p>
<b>Environmental Issues</b>	straddles equator; has narrow strip of land that controls the lower Congo River and is only outlet to South Atlantic Ocean; dense tropical rain forest in central river basin and eastern highlands
<b>PEOPLE</b>	
<b>Population</b>	70,916,439
<b>Ethnic Groups</b>	over 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes – Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up about 45 % of the population
<b>Religions</b>	Roman Catholic 50 %, Protestant 20 %, Kimbanguist 10 %, Muslim 10 %, other (includes syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs) 10 %
<b>Languages</b>	French (official), Lingala (a lingua franca trade language), Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	67.2 % (age and over) male: 80.9 %; female: 54.1 % (2001 est.)
<b>Major Infectious Diseases</b>	<p>degree of risk: very high</p> <p>food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever; vectorborne diseases: malaria, plague, and African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness); water contact disease: schistosomiasis; animal contact disease: rabies (2009)</p> <p>HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate: 4.2 %; 1.1 million people living with HIV/AIDS; 100,000 people died (2003 est.)</p>
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>Type</b>	republic
<b>Independence</b>	30 June 1960 (from Belgium)

Constitution	18 February 2006
Legal System	civil law based on Belgian law with Napoleonic Civil Code Influence; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations
<b>ECONOMY</b>	
Agricultural Products	coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, tea, quinine, cassava (tapioca), palm oil, bananas, root crops, corn, fruits; wood products
Industries	Mining (diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, coltan, zinc, tin, diamonds), mineral processing, consumer products (including textiles, footwear, cigarettes, processed foods and beverages), cement, commercial ship repair
Import commodities	foodstuffs, mining and other machinery, transport equipment, fuels
Import Partners	South Africa 18.22 %, Belgium 10.2 %, China 8.34 %, Zambia 7.77 %, France 7.28 %, Zimbabwe 6.52 %, Kenya 5.48 %, Netherlands 4.13 %, Italy 3.96 % (2009)
Export Commodities	diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, wood products, crude oil, coffee
Export Partners	China 46.75 %, US 15.35 %, Belgium 10.68 %, Zambia 5.78%, Finland 4.38 % (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$300 (2010 est.)
Population below poverty line	NA %

\*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.

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<b>General</b>	
Life Expectancy at Birth (in years)	48.0 years
Average number of years in School (in years)	3.8 years
Gross National Income Per Capita (In US Dollars)	\$291
<b>Gender Inequality</b>	
Female Seats in Parliament (%)	7.7%
Population with at least a Secondary Education Female (% Of 25 and older)	10.7%
Population with at least a Secondary Education Male (% Of 25 and older)	36.2%
Labor Force Participation Female (%)	57.4%
Labor Force Participation Male (%)	86.8%
Births Attended by Skilled Health Professionals (%)	74%
<b>Poverty</b>	
Population surviving on \$1.25 per day (%)	59.2%
<b>Empowerment</b>	
Number of Journalists Imprisoned	0
Corruption Victims (% of people who face a bribe situation in the last year)	--
Political Engagement (% percent of people who voiced opinion to public officials)	19%

<b>Sustainability</b>	
Fossil Fuels as Primary Energy Source (%)	4%
Renewable Resources as Primary Energy Source (%)	96%
Population without Access to Water (%)	54%
Population Without Access to Sanitation Services (%)	77%
Population affected by natural disasters (% between 2000-2009)	<0.01 %
<b>Human Security</b>	
Number of Refugees leaving this country	368,000
Number of Internally Displaced People in This Country	19,000,000
Prevalence of Undernourishment (%)	75%
<b>Demographics</b>	
Urban Residents (% of total Population)	35.2%
<b>Health</b>	
HIV Prevalence in Female Youth (% ages 15-24)	--
HIV Prevalence in Male Youth (% ages 15-24)	--
HIV Prevalence in Adults (% ages 15-49)	--
<b>Other</b>	
Official Development Assistance Per Capita (in US dollars)	\$25.10
Population without Electricity (%)	88.7%

